



City of New Bedford
Scott W. Lang, Mayor

City of New Bedford
Office of the Mayor
Contact: Elizabeth Treadup
(508) 979-1410
Elizabeth.Treadup@newbedford-ma.gov

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

NEW BEDFORD CELEBRATES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT WEEK

NEW BEDFORD MA – This week, New Bedford Mayor Scott W. Lang is encouraging city residents, community agencies and local officials to acknowledge National Community Development Week.

Earlier this week, Mayor Scott W. Lang issued an official proclamation declaring this week National Community Development Week in New Bedford. Several events are planned throughout the week to mark Community Development Week in New Bedford including:

- Open Houses at several Community Development Block Grant Funded programs
- Presentation of the Sister Rose Ellen Gallogly Award to an outstanding homeless service provider

The weeklong celebration will culminate with a project launch and presentation at the Andre McCoy Gymnasium on Hillman St on Wednesday, April 15th at 2:00PM. Thanks to CDBG funds and nearly \$1.5 million in special congressional allocations, the gym will soon be transformed into the City's first public, all-purpose community center. Congressman Barney Frank, who secured the congressional funding for the project, will be the honored guest at this event.

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is the largest federal program that provides grants to states, cities and counties to design neighborhood-based approaches to improve the physical, economic, and social conditions in communities throughout the country. In the coming fiscal year, the City of New Bedford will receive just under \$3 million in CDBG funding.

Community Development Week 2009 marks the 35th Anniversary of the CDBG program in operation in the City of New Bedford. The City has received over \$132 million over the course of the past 35 years. The CDBG program has provided a critical revenue source that revitalizes New Bedford's neighborhoods and directly assists city residents in need.

Some of the programs being funded with CDBG funds in the current year include:

- Restoration of city-owned vacant lots for use as pocket parks, community gardens, and municipal parking lots.

- Public facility renovations to the Congdon-Lucas House at Hazelwood Park, the Andre McCoy Gymnasium, and Clegg Field
- Assistance totaling \$481,500 to 24 non-profit and city agencies to carry out public service activities such as: summer youth employment and programming, senior social programs, immigrant assistance, homeless prevention, social and leisure activities for individuals with disabilities, legal assistance, and art therapy.
- Economic development assistance to attract new businesses to New Bedford, to create new jobs and to expand existing businesses.
- Public infrastructure funding to upgrade sewer lines and repair streets and sidewalks in targeted census tracts.

“This funding is critical to improving the quality of life in New Bedford’s neighborhoods,” said Mayor Lang. “The CDBG program is targeted to low and moderate income residents and neighborhoods, and has helped thousands of people throughout the years. But, even if you’ve never received a loan or grant, this money has had a positive impact on your life. It has been used to repair the roads we all drive on and the recreational areas everyone enjoys. And it will be used to turn an old gym into a state-of-the-art, all-purpose community center everyone in the city can enjoy,” he said.

Patrick Sullivan, Director of the City’s Office of Housing and Community Development concurs. “The CDBG program is an indispensable resource for communities all across the country, and is particularly vital to cities like New Bedford. It offers tremendous flexibility and local control, and allows the City to undertake projects that would be impossible to fund otherwise in the current fiscal environment. The CDBG program continues to be a centerpiece of community renewal throughout the country.”

The CDBG Program is administered nationally by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and locally by the Office of Housing and Community Development, 608 Pleasant Street, New Bedford. For additional information on the CDBG Program please contact Patrick J. Sullivan, Housing and Community Development Director at (508) 979-1500.

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